

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

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VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1820.

NO. 17.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you—JOHN xiii. 34.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

Concluded from page 63.

BRETHREN IN THE MINISTRY.—The evidences which we enjoy in the increase of the knowledge of the glory and salvation of God, must encourage us in the belief, that we are engaged in a work, in which the Lord is our helper; and that it is the cause of truth which the Lord is pleased to own and bless. It becomes then our duty as ministers of the grace of God, and labourers in an holy and righteous cause, embracing the eternal happiness of the whole family of man; that we shew forth our gratitude, by increasing engagedness in the work of the ministry; cultivating among ourselves all those christian affections and virtues which will unite in the spirit of love, as well as in work, and gain for us the respect and esteem of those with whom we sojourn. It is also necessary that we should exercise kindness and liberality in private conversation, and in all our public communications, that we might thereby win the attention of our enemies, and be enabled to convert them to friends; ever bearing in remembrance the instruction given to Timothy, that, “the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.”—Let us then brethren be prepared unto every good work, being “instant in season and out of season to preach the word, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.” Let the aged servant of the Lord, who has spent his best days in stemming the torrent of opposition, rejoice that the seed he has sown, has been watered as with the dews of heaven, and brought forth fruit in abundance. And while encouraged to pursue the work, in beholding so many fellow helpers rising up among the youth, or coming out from the errors which they have heretofore preached, to the saving knowledge of the

truth, declaring the glad tiding of great joy, may his heart swell with gratitude to the Supreme Giver of every good, and may the numerous Societies which he beholds springing up around him, operate as an increasing excitement to faithfulness in the cause of truth; that by a fervent piety, manifested in the exercise of brotherly love, and every christian virtue, the younger brethren may be strengthened, and their hearts encouraged in the performance of every duty. Finally, brethren, may we all so live as to be a mutual help to each other, that the world may become benefitted by our labours, God glorified in the increasing happiness of his rational offspring, and we ever enjoy the plaudit of well done good and faithful servant.

We would in the spirit of that religion which speaketh peace to the world, address all those children of our heavenly Father who differ from us in sentiment. Dear Brethren, many of you have imbibed the idea, that the doctrine of God's universal love was a demoralizing doctrine; we have no doubt but that your opposition has been directed by the best of motives; that you have acted conscientiously under the impression that its influence would have a bad tendency in society. We blame you not. But we now invite you seriously and candidly to answer this question: Have your friends and neighbours who live around you, and who have embraced the belief in the salvation of all men, become worse members of society than they were before? You certainly notice the passing events of the times; you are sensible that the sentiment gains ground around you, and you must know whether those who embrace it, are less honest, upright, kind, friendly and benevolent than they used to be. Sufficient time for certifying the effects of the sentiment upon society has elapsed, and if you are compelled to acknowledge by candid observation, that it has no evil tendency, do you brethren, act wisely to continue your opposition on

this ground? We only ask of you an exercise of candour and christian charity, and that you do not load a sentiment with consequences which do not belong to it. A moment's reflection would teach you, that if that heavenly mercy and unchanging love of Almighty God, on which the sentiment is predicated, warm the heart of the believer, it must produce a disposition to do to others, as he would they should do unto him.

We humbly pray that the day be not far distant, when all opposition to the glorious gospel of peace and good will shall cease, and you all made partakers of that joy and peace which is the happy portion of those who believe “that God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” Brethren, we affectionately commend you, to the safe keeping of the great Shepherd of Israel, to whom you belong, with the whole of man as his purchased possession.

All herein addressed, are commend-ed to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build them up, and give them an inheritance among them that are sanctified.

By order of the Convention,
RICHARD CARRIQUE.

ERRATUM.—On page 62, col. 3, after the word throne,” insert a comma, instead of the period and quotation, and add,—even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”

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MR. EDITOR,

Having read with considerable pleasure the letter of Benjamin Franklin to George Whitefield, which you published in your last Number, I take the liberty of sending you one written by the venerable Judge Hale, about a century and half ago, if you think it worth a place in your Messenger, the insertion of it will much oblige

Yours, &c.

A SUBSCRIBER.

LETTER.*

He that fears the Lord of heaven and earth, walks humbly before Him, thankfully lays hold of the message of redemption by Jesus Christ, and strives to express his thankfulness by the sincerity of his obedience. He is sorry with all his soul when he comes short of his duty. He walks watchfully in the denial of himself, and holds no confederacy with any lust, or known sin: if he fails in the least measure, he is restless till he has made his peace by true repentance. He is true to his promises, just in his dealings, charitable to the poor, sincere in his devotions. He will not deliberately dishonour God, although secure of impunity. He hath his hopes and his conversation in heaven, and dares not do any thing unjustly, be it ever so much to his advantage; and all this because he sees him that is invisible, and fears him because he loves him; fears him as well for his goodness as his greatness.—Such a man, whether he be an Episcopalian or a Presbyterian, or Independent, or Anabaptist, whether he wears a surplice, or wears none, whether he hears organs or hears none, whether he kneels at the communion, or for conscience sake stand or sits, he hath the life of religion in him; and that life acts in him, and will conform his soul to the image of his Saviour, and go along with him to eternity, notwithstanding his practice or non-practice of things indifferent.—On the other side, if a man fears not the eternal God, he can commit sin with presumption, drink excessively, swear vainly or falsely, commit adultery, lie, cozen, cheat, break his promises, live loosely, though at the same time he may be studious to practice every ceremony, even to a scrupulous exactness, or may perhaps as strenuously oppose them. Though such a one should cry down Bishops or Presbytery, though he should be re-baptized every day or declaim against it as heresy, and though he fast all Lent, or feast out of pretence of avoiding superstition; yet notwithstanding these, and a thousand external conformities, or zealous opposition to them, he wants the life of Religion.

* Intitled the summing up of a religious character.

MARY OF THE MOUNTAIN.

[We are indebted for the following brief Sketch and Epitaph to the pen of a Lady who had several times visited the interesting character whom it pourtrays. Our readers will doubtless sympathise with the feelings which its perusal has excited in our breasts, and will unite with us in sincere acknowledgments to the writer for enabling us to record a just and liberal tribute to the memory of "Mary of the Mountain." *Christ. Journ.*]

MARY YOUNG, was a native of Germany.—She came to America sometime about the year 1764-5, and settled near Germantown, in the state of Pennsylvania, together with her mother and several sisters, all of whom were young women. They had suffered persecution in their native country, and therefore sought an assylum here. Finding that their peculiar and secluded habits drew upon them the gaze of curiosity, they left Germantown, and sought out a sequestered spot among the hills of Oley, in the County of Berks, Pennsylvania, where, by the most incredible labour, they cleared a few acres of land on the side of a mountain, and there erected a neat little cottage, in which they passed the remainder of their days. A small enclosure near the cottage, now contains all that is left of their family of love, the last of whom was Mary, who survived her last relation near forty years, during which time she lived alone, passed her leisure in deeds of charity and good will to her neighbors, and in love and adoration of her Maker. She visited the sick, and administered to their wants, but never tarried to eat or to converse with them on common topics of conversation. Her language, which was always in her native tongue, was elegant; her manner and countenance mild and benevolent; her opinions liberal and rational, and worship ardent and pure. Her cottage was a temple hallowed to the Lord, from whence ascended the incense of prayer and praise, pure and undefiled as could arise from the human heart.

Her little territory was the abode of peace and tranquillity, on the side of the Mountain; a few acres of beatiful upland meadow surrounded it. For

many years it was enveloped in an impervious forest, its scite could be ascertained only by the smoke which curled above the tops of the trees.—Not a cat, or a dog, or any other domestic companion had she, except a cow, for whose bed she collected the dry leaves of autumn. Her food was composed of fruits and vegetables, and she quenched her thirst in the limpid mountain spring—an apt emblem of that living fountain of which her spirit drank and whose stream leads to everlasting joy and felicity!

Finding herself weak and languishing, she crept to the edge of the Mountain, and there waited with unmurmuring patience, till she was perceived to crave the charity she had so often bestowed on others. She was seen and pitied. A kind friend attended on her to smooth her pillow, and to witness her happy exit. She bore the most excruciating agony without a murmur; continually giving thanks to her Redeemer for the grace which imparted fortitude to resist complaint.

From the weakness of an infant, she was endued with strength at last to raise herself on her knee, and offer up an ardent prayer, after which she returned to her bed, and closing her own eyes, fell asleep in Christ Jesus, on Thursday the 16th of November, 1819, aged seventy-four.

She had desired to be laid in the little enclosure which contains the graves of her mother and her sisters, without parade, and in a plain manner, but the affection of her neighbors drew together a large congregation, who felt in her end how sweet it was to die in the Lord.

Here, underneath this mountain stone,
Lies Mary Young, who lived alone,
High on the lofty Mountain's side,
Belov'd and honor'd till she died;
Lov'd and honor'd by the few
Who give to Virtue, Virtue's due.
Stranger! she that's buried here,
Was humble, pious and sincere;
The even tenor of her days
Was pass'd in grateful prayer and praise;
Her heart was like the gentle dove,
That came from heav'n with promis'd love.
Her heart, her hands, her cottage door,
Were open to the rich and poor;
Her faith confirmed, her will resigned,
So sweetly calm, so pure a mind,
The God of Mercy, from his throne
Look'd down and claimed her for his own.

Christian Messenger.

Philadelphia, Saturday, November 25, 1820.

The following Treatise was published in Charlestown, (Mass.) in 1811; and as it has been for several years entirely out of print, we have thought proper to insert it in the Messenger, as we may have opportunity, but not however to the exclusion of any original matter which may be offered.

Light shining in Darkness, and the Darkness comprehending it not;

OR, A

SHORT TREATISE
ON THE CARNAL MIND.

In which the character of God is exhibited in a plain, striking, and unexceptionable light; and his adversary, the devil, being stripp'd of all disguise, appears, as he really is, the father of lies.

PREFACE.

It is possible, that, by reading the above title, especially the two poetical lines, the reader has already anticipated that he should find, in this Treatise, a burlesque upon religion; or the seeds of infidelity; written without candour, and with a total disregard for truth. But if this should happen to be the state of the reader's mind, he is requested to pass it over, and read no further: for none but an uncandid reader would ever wish to read an uncandid author. But if the reader can be prevailed upon to divest himself of prejudice, and read on, with due attention, until he has given this treatise a fair investigation, if he does not find a sufficient degree of candour, and a sacred regard for truth, it is because the writer is not sufficiently acquainted with his own heart. And if he be disposed to proceed, he is only requested, should he find any statements which he conceives to be incorrect, to cast a mantle of charity over them, impute them to a want of understanding, or want of information, and treat them as errors of the head, and not of the heart.

It is too late in the day to frighten people (unless it be the weaker sort indeed) with bare suggestions. The world at large have become too much enlightened to take bare assertions for incontestable facts. Time has been

when a man might substitute energy for argument, violent emotions for cool reasoning, and all would be received, and go down with rapture; but now, and it is well for the world that it is so, a man must accompany his propositions with suitable evidence, and arguments to support them, or he will not be believed. People have grown too wise to take the bare assertions, even of a MINISTER, for truth, without further evidence; and there are some, in almost every assembly, who are not only capable of noticing inconsistencies and contradictions, but are bold enough to speak of them: for each one has an equal right to think and judge for himself and to speak his own thoughts, and no man is to be hurt for his opinion only. Therefore it behoves a minister of the gospel to study propriety, assert nothing more than what he can prove, and draw all his arguments from the scriptures and the reason and nature of things; ever remembering that the eyes of the world are upon him, and it behoveth him that "while he thinketh he standeth, to take heed lest he fall."

"To assert that the excellency of speech, and the enticing words of man's wisdom, are necessary to enforce the Truths of the Gospel, is to impeach the judgment of one whose choice did not proceed of necessity, when he chose plainness of speech, such as was familiar to the meanest capacity: I mean the apostle to the Gentiles; he looked on the enticements of speech, as a proceeding unworthy the majesty of his master, yea rather hurtful than helpful unto his hearers; lest their faith should stand in the wisdom of man, and not in the power of God. Hence I am encouraged to hope, that the absence of those embellishments from my Treatise (though it proceed of necessity) will neither mar the beauty, nor relax the nerves of Truth contained therein: And, what further conspires to render my expectations sanguine in this particular, is the persuasion, that there are such in the world whose ears cannot be charmed with dead unmeaning sounds, and whose hearts are susceptible of Truth in its artless native dress." That the following treatise contains some good things, it is presumed, will not be denied by any; and it is modestly suggested to the lovers of truth, that should they discover any dangerous errors, the best way to sup-

press them will be to give the work a fair refutation.

What is principally contended for, in this Treatise, is, that the devil is not, of himself, a real being; that all real beings are creatures of God; that they all owe their existence to him, and are equally dependent on him; that the devil is a negative principle, or being, (if he may be called a being) existing only in idea, in every sense opposite to God, which may be attached to any finite rational being, and operate through the medium of his senses; that all the creatures of God, whether angels, or men, possessed all that was necessary to constitute them real beings before they could, with any degree of propriety, be called devils; and therefore the same beings will exist, in all their essential parts, even after the devil is destroyed!

Such is the nature of the sentiments illustrated in this Treatise; and, with all their imperfections, which, whatever may be their fate, may have a claim, at least, upon the candor of an enlightened world, it is now faithfully submitted, by the public's most obedient, and very humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

A Treatise, &c.

TO attempt to bring to light the mysteries of him who has been the terror of millions; who secretly walks in darkness, filling with horror the frightened imagination of men, women, and children; and, who, it is said, has frequently, (especially in former times) appeared to people, in various forms and shapes, performing many wonderful, extraordinary, and unaccountable exploits, which none but the devil could do! and to attempt to prove that this being exists only in the chimera and imagination of credulous mortals, may be considered, by many, a very bold and hazardous undertaking!

Commencing, therefore, on such a work, may I not justly expect to see the clouds begin to darken—to hear the wind hoarsely roaring at a distance—to behold a storm gathering over my head—to feel the air thickening around me—to see my candle burn blue!—and to hear hissing in every corner of my room, if possible, to frighten me from the attempt, while I begin to write the page that shall touch so black a cha-

racter? All, however, is still, notwithstanding my contemplation on this horrid subject! The moon being about at the full, the air clear and serene, the evening remarkably fine, and having just returned from a pleasant walk, my mind is duly prepared for serious reflection. Perhaps a more suitable time could not have been chosen to write upon the subject I have proposed. And notwithstanding all the frightful stories which I have heard respecting the *father of lies*, and notwithstanding I have now endeavoured to portray them all before me, yet, my mind is perfectly calm, my blood cool, and my nerves pliable; so that there is not the least tremor upon any part of my frame. I will therefore begin to write.

My first principle is to adopt reason for my polar star, and the Holy Scriptures for my compass, by which, with a just application, I hope to be led to the focus of Divine truth respecting the mighty subject before me.

But as I purpose to be very brief, I must write in a plain and simple style; and in this, I trust, I shall be excused, for I write rather to instruct than to please. Truth, when reduced to its original simplicity, needs but little ornament to make it acceptable to every rational, unprejudiced mind; and falsehood only needs to be stripped of all disguise to be rejected by every man of sense.

The *orthodox* doctrine of the devil, if I may be allowed the expression, is, that he was once an angel of light, and an inhabitant of heaven; but by some means or other, pride entered his heart, and aiming at the throne of God, he refused due subjection; and, for his rebellion, was cast out of heaven, and become a devil!

This chimerical story is abundantly exemplified by Milton, in his "Paradise Lost;" and it is looked up to, by thousands, as solemn truth; with how much evidence, is best known to themselves. However, as I shall have occasion to speak more particularly of angels, hereafter, I shall not attend minutely to this story in this place; for, admitting it correct, it does not prove that true, which I shall endeavour to prove false; that is, that the devil is, of himself, a real being.

It is evident, even according to Milton, that the fallen angel was not a

devil when he was created; for no one will have the audacity to say, in so many words, that God ever created a devil! But the rebel angel, according to Milton, was a real being when he was created; as much so as he is now. Supposing therefore the angel to be a real being, and that which constituted him a devil to be a real being also; then the devil is now, properly speaking, two real beings united in one! than which nothing can be more absurd! Or, if it be contended that the nature of the angel changed, and that which was holy became unholy; or that which was pure became impure; then it must follow of course that holiness is no security against unholiness, nor purity against impurity; and consequently there can be no such thing as security in heaven!

If the angel possessed nothing but a pure and holy nature before he fell, what could have induced him to rebel? From whence originated his pride? Could pride grow out of a pure and holy principle? Or could a holy being possess any other principle than that which was pure and holy?

Let the reader reflect seriously on the above questions, and he will find a difficulty in believing that a pure, perfect, and holy being ever fell; or that he could become impure, imperfect, and unholy, by any thing that he could do of himself. For no being was ever yet able, as I humbly conceive, to change the first principles of his own nature. None but the Author of a being is able to change the nature or first principles of that being. And as God, only, is self-existent, so he, only, is not subject to change. And the change of all finite beings depends wholly on a superior cause, or a cause above themselves.

It may be asked here, was not man made upright? and did he not fall from that state of rectitude, into a state of sin and misery? To which I answer, man did not fall from a state of perfection, nor until he was "formed of the dust," and "made subject to vanity." In a word, a being must be made fallible, by the all forming Hand of nature, before he can possibly fall.

Nothing, I think, can be more self-evident than the following proposition; to wit, that there can be but one *eternal principle*. This principle must be altogether good, or altogether bad: and

whether this principle be good, or whether it be bad, I believe there can be no question; for the wonderful works of creation and providence so clearly demonstrate the wisdom, power, and love of God, that it is altogether needless to attempt a formal proof of his Divine goodness.

If this hypothesis be admitted, as I think it must, then it follows of course, that there is no *eternal principle of evil*.

To be continued.

—oo—

SELECTED FOR THE MESSENGER.

FRIENDSHIP.

Friendship! thou source of nameless joys

Of most that Heaven or earth bestows;

That oft the fear of death destroys,

And oft dispels the deepest woes.

That cheers the heart where misery dwells

And binds the broken heart anew;

Pours comfort in its inmost cells,

And sheds the tear of feeling true.

That mingles all the sweets of life,

With purer joy, with higher bliss,

That brightens love, that softens strife,

That makes a heavenly world of this.

Entwine thy fair unfading wreath

Around two souls whose vows are thine;

And o'er it all thy fervour breathe

Whilst it incloses her's and mine;

Whilst life in long perspective glows,

And pleasures' toys are spread around,

Whilst joy with chrystal streamlet flows

And flow'rets on its banks abound.

Fancy oft prints the pathway clear,

O'erlooks each thorn and pois'nous weed,

Sees lasting bliss in toys appear,

And scorns, of broken faith, the deed.

Oh! let not these illusions fade

When misery meets us on our way;

And friendship seems an empty shade,

Just blown and fading in a day.

If much of grief I'm doom'd to bear,

If sickness, or if want oppress;

Say wilt thou all my sorrows share?

Or would you, could you, love me less?

Ah no, it cannot, must not be!

Yet I have seen the sacred band,

Oft broken by as fond as thee,

Oft sever'd by as fair a hand.

Yet why should we assiduous try

To gaze at Sorrow and her train!

Whilst Pleasures' beams are fleeting by,

And not secure the golden gain.

Then whilst the moments are our own,

We should improve them as they glide;

And e'er they are forever flown,

Let each with Friendship's hue be dy'd.

And trust me,—I will ne'er suspect

That social candid heart of thine,

Nor e'er shall time or chance effect,

These cordial sentiments of mine.

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Neatly executed at this Office.